

OLE MARSTER  
AND  
OTHER VERSES

BENJAMIN BATCHELDER VALENTINE

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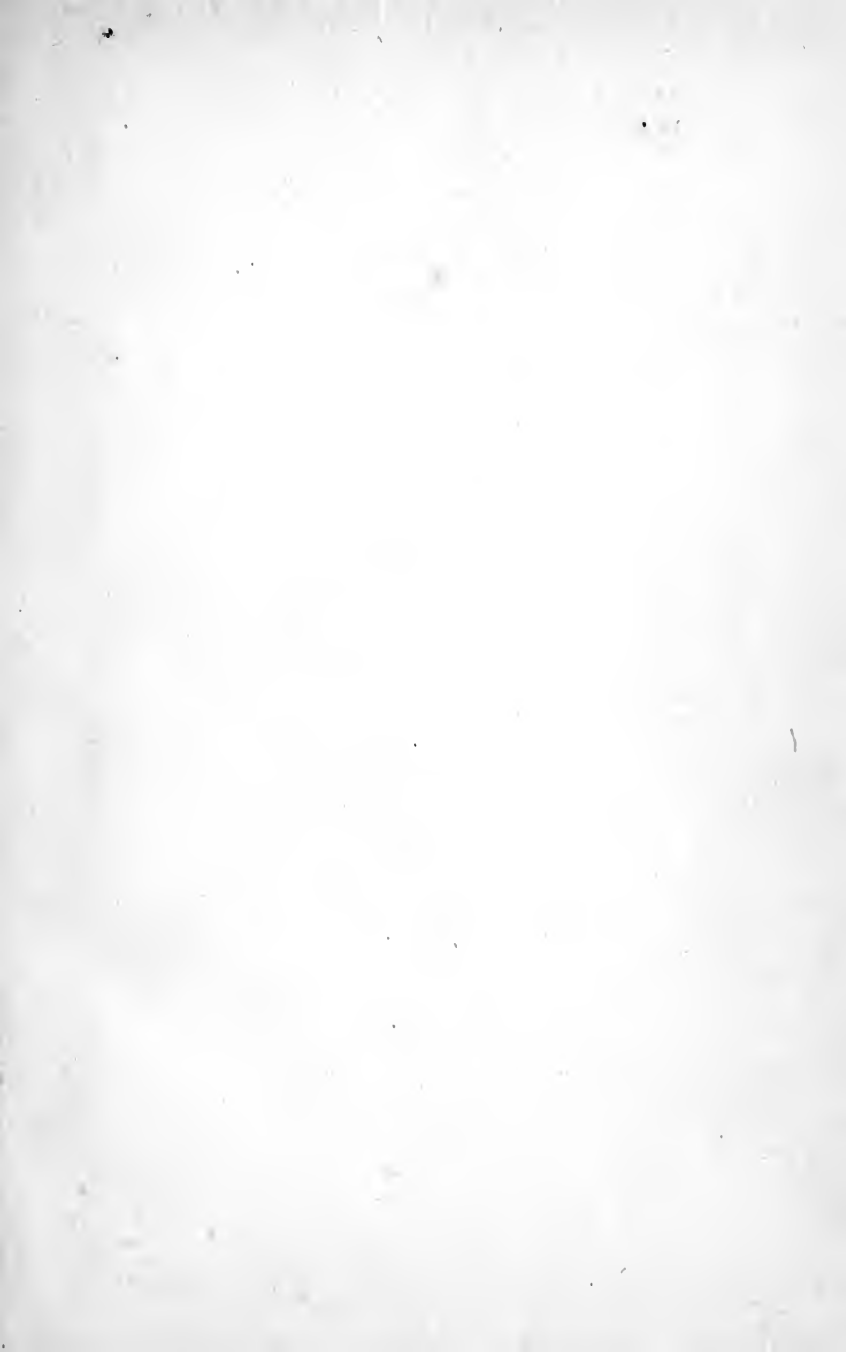


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**OLE MARSTER  
AND OTHER VERSES**

**THE VALENTINE MUSEUM**  
**RICHMOND, VIRGINIA**

# OLE MARSTER

AND OTHER VERSES

*By*

BENJAMIN B. VALENTINE

RICHMOND, VA.

WHITTET & SHEPPERSON, PRINTERS

1921

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From the Press of Whittet & Shepperson  
Richmond, Va.

FEB -9 1922

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To My Wife  
Lila Meade Valentine



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## Foreword

SOUTHERN negroes brought up by "Ole Master" and "Ole Mistis," and even descendants of these dear, dark folk who inherited their character, manners, speech and devotion to "we all's white folks" are rapidly becoming mere tradition, and with them is passing from the American scene something vital, something precious. Time never was when they could have been understood, much less interpreted by any not of the soil and to the manner born—by which is meant the white people who were associated with them in a relation unique then and impossible now, whom they loved and served and who loved and served them.

The survival long after The War Between the States of many instances of this relation enabled a later day to know and appreciate these humble but interesting folk. A Virginian who possessed a supreme gift for interpreting them so that through his work they will live always in a world which he himself has left, was Benjamin Batchelder Valentine.

Both nature and circumstances fitted him for the work. To inherited gifts of heart and mind was added liberal culture, both intellectual and spiritual. During his formative years an ample home—an old and storied Richmond mansion, whose rooms were filled with books and treasures of artistic and sentimental value—provided the setting for wholesome family life. It was

a home to which faithful colored folk contributed comfort and dignity—a home in whose walled garden flowers bloomed and the laughter of the children of the house and their dusky playfellows from the servants' quarters mingled with song of bird and plash of fountain.

The head of this house was comrade, guide and example to his sons. To his servants he was the friend and protector who inspired loyalty. He would have been in earlier days an ideal "Ole Marster."

In such an environment Benjamin Batchelder Valentine learned to "know by heart" the old-time colored folk. To see and hear him impersonate them was an unforgettable experience. His interpretations were always in verse, but they were no ordinary dialect verse. Under the quaint humor which bubbled on their surface flowed a deep current whose echo could be heard in his mellow, lilting voice, for all its contagious chuckles, and which could be glimpsed in his expressive eyes for all their merry twinkling—showing that with fine imagination, with sympathy amounting to genius, he felt at once the picturesque traits of his subjects which shallower interpreters are prone to caricature and their mental and spiritual processes. Whether or not the philosophy which was a marked characteristic of these simple souls was an original development or was imbibed from their "white folks" and passed on in intensified form to their "white folks'" children, is impossible to say, but as seen in the work of "Ben Valentine" it is as typical of the interpreter as of the interpreted. Each portrait in the gal-

lery which his negro verse comprises is sketched with unerring touch from some point of vantage peculiar to itself, and the whole thus presents, as nearly complete as could be within bounds so circumscribed, a visualization of a vanishing race.

Here are flawlessly reproduced its terse and engaging phrase, its ingenious vocabulary; here are its original whimsicalities and delightful absurdities. All of this is well worth preserving, but here is, in addition, something more subtle, more salient—its philosophy, whose interpretation was to “Ben Valentine” as spontaneous as breathing, being his own.

In “Keep a Grinnin’,” for instance, he was picturing the attitude toward life of the old-time colored person of Virginia, but he was also describing out of his own heart the cheerful face which he—like that passing figure—had learned, with a grit which was heroic, with a trust in God which was sublime, to turn upon adversity. Adversity in his case meaning a long battle with illness which brought him down at the flush of life in a world which to him was always radiant, for it reflected his own radiant spirit, and ended that life when it was still in its prime.

MARY NEWTON STANARD.





## OLE MARSTER

---

Fotch in some mo' de big logs, Sam—hyer nigger,  
shet dat doh—

My Marster! how de snow come down an' how de  
win' do blow!

Dem draughts through dat 'ar broken pane gwine kill  
me, dat dey is,

Dey's blowin' right squar' on de place whar' I got  
rheumatiz.

Pitch on de lot er light-wood chips, an' poke dat  
fire ergain,

Please stuff yo' mammy's petticoat in dat 'ar  
broken pane,

An tek de skillet off de hook—dat chimley's got ter  
draw.

My! but dis snow is mighty like dat snow befo' de  
war!

It meks me kind er creepy-like ter heah dat howlin'  
win';

It soun' like critters in de cole er-whinin' ter git in,  
An' dem big gusts dey waves de pines an' keeps 'em  
moanin' so—

Jes' listen! ain't dat folks whar's los' er-hollerin'  
"Yo-o-o"?

'Tain' nothin'—I wuz wand'rin, Son, 'way back ter  
fifty-six,  
I clean fergot 'bout dis hyer time an' all de years  
ertwix.  
Ole folks don' need no mem'ry strings ter call ole times  
ter min',  
Dey jes' finds written on dey hearts de tallies o' de  
time.

Dat night Ole Marster sent me roun' ter see de  
critters housed,  
Kase, as de overseer wuz sick, he didn' want him  
'roused,  
An' when I got back frum my roun's, I wuz er shiverin'  
so,  
I come nigh gwine in de hall fo' I stomp off de  
snow.

I see folks in de dinin'-room, so I went back in dyar  
Ter 'port ter Marster whar I'd been, an' how de  
critters fyar.  
Dat room ain' need no candle light, nor Suh, de big  
fire dorgs  
Hel' out dey brass arms chock right full er blazin'  
hic'ry lorgs,

An' on de rug befo' de fire, enjoyin' er de heat,  
Blin' Ponto, kind er drowsy-like, lay stretch' at  
Marster's feet,  
An' Mistiss wuz er-sittin' on er cricket by his side  
Er-heah'in Marster tell about de time she wuz er  
bride.

Dey saw dat I wuz nigh 'bout friz, frum trampin' in  
de storm,  
So dey jes' kep' me by de fire 'till I felt nice an'  
warm;  
An' Mistiss know'd what niggers like; she fotch'  
some bread an' ham,  
An' den, ter warm dem vittals up, she pour' me out  
er dram.

You'll 'scuse me tellin' such as dat an' ramblin'  
frum de trac',  
But Marster kep' de kin' er dram folks always  
raccolac';  
Besides, dem vittals an' dat dram wuz mighty useful  
too,  
I needed all de strength dey gin befo' dat night wuz  
through.

Jes' time I tuk dat drink I hear er big fuss in de  
hall,

An' Lindy Smith bus' in de room er-hollerin' fo' us  
all:

"Lord, Marster! He'p me git my chile, she gwine die,  
sart'in sho',

"Lord, Marster! Fin' my little gal whar's los' out in  
de snow!

When I wuz 'way her drunken pa sent her off ter  
de sto',

An' now she's been de Lord knows whar', nigh 'bout  
three hours or mo'!"

Wid dat she drap right down an' mourn like she done  
gone distrac',

An' Mistiss knelt an' smooth her haid an' bring her  
senses back.

Ole Marster fotch' his big slouch hat an' his tall  
hic'ry stick;

He made me git his lantern out an' trim an' light  
de wick;

An' time he put his thick boots on, an' button' up his  
coat,

Ole Mistiss had his muffler warm an' tuck it roun'  
his throat.

He wuz er mighty likely man—nigh on ter six foot  
three—

An' hel' hissself, at sixty-five, as straight as straight  
could be;

He look' de gen'ral in his cloak, one han' thrus' in his  
bres',

His long cape flap flung careless 'cross his shoulder  
an' his ches'.

De win' wuz high when we went out; de snow whirl'  
roun' an' roun';

It pour' down on us frum de clouds; den blew up  
frum de groun'.

'Peared like de sperits er de a'r wan' fight us han' ter  
han',

An' ev'y sperit in de fight had tuk ter flingin' san'.

I see right now de home lights fade; I heah Ole  
Marster speak:—

“You search de main road; I will take de pathway  
'cross de creek.

Be careful; 'zamine all de road; zig-zag frum side ter  
side.

You are not likely ter git los', de fence will be yo'  
guide.”

Dar 'twuz—de marster tuk de path, de nigger tuk  
de road—

Dar wan' no fence ter guide him by, an' dat Ole  
Marster know'd.

'Twuz like de blue-blood cappen man ter take de  
dang'ous lead,

An' do it like twa' nothin' 'tall 'cep' nat'ral ter his  
breed.

I tuk de road, but sech er time I never had befo';  
My light went out an' I jes' grope an' couldn' see  
ter go.

At las' I cotch hol' er de fence, but I wuz so turn'  
roun'

I didn' know which way wuz up er which er-way wuz  
down.

I got so col' dat I would fall—somehow I didn'  
cyar—

I jes' would wonder: "Whar is I, an' what's I doin'  
dyar?"

I 'spose dat I wuz gittin' friz an' in de sleepy state,  
And dar an' den I stumble' 'pon de horse-block by  
de gate;

Dat wuz er mons'us 'couragement—it woke me up  
right smart;

It made me notice in de snow er light dat made me  
start.

De red er fire wuz in de a'r, de glow wuz nigh an'  
far,

I couldn' tell whar it was at, bekase 'twuz ev'ywhar.

I 'spicioned dat de great-house den wuz gwine in er  
blaze,

An' so I wuk' my way erlong, do' I wuz mighty  
daze';

I thought: "My Mistiss mout git bu'nt—de Lord  
knows what gwine 'cur—

But ef dis nigger dies ter-night he wan' ter die fer  
her."

'Fo' long I see, nigh ter de house, dey'd built er big  
bon-fire,

An' folks wuz bringin' wood an' stuff ter set it  
blazin' higher;

Wet logs wuz pull' frum 'neath de snow, an' pitch'  
upon de pile,

But in dat win' dey bu'nt up quick like dey wuz soak'  
wid ile.

Dat fire wuz built ter guide us by, an' sence I'd  
gotten home,  
We all wuz 'spectin' any time ter see Ole Marster  
come.  
All through de night de bon-fire bu'nt; we call,' an'  
wander' roun';  
We stood an' listen' fer er voice, but never heah'd er  
soun'.

Befo' de dawn de snow hilt up, bekase de win' had  
veer',  
An' by sun-up de clouds had lif' an' lef' de mornin'  
clear,  
Yet still de win' wuz blowin' hard, an' drif's wuz  
ev'ywhar,  
Dey'd pile an' pile up fer er spell, den leave de  
places byar.

We took ter searchin' 'bout de creek, er-huntin' up  
an 'down,  
An' in de bushes on de edge Ole Marster's hat wuz  
foun'.  
I den made sho' dat, in de dark, he'd fallen frum de  
bank  
An' plunge' inter de freezin' stream, an' dis wuz whar  
he sank.



But sudden-like, Big Aaron call', an' time I tu'n an'  
look,  
He threw his han's up 'fo' his eyes, an' hid his face  
an' shook,  
An' when I got whar he wuz at, 'bout knee deep in  
de snow,  
He p'inted 'round' but didn' speak, he wuz er-cryin'  
so.

Dyar lay Ole Marster in de drif', stretch' out like he  
wuz 'sleep;  
One han' wuz holdin' tight his cape dat covered up  
er-heap,  
An' as I lif' dat icy cape, while Aaron gave de 'larm,  
Dar wuz Sis' Lindy's little gal, dead, in Ole Mars-  
ter's arm.

Put down dis pipe an' han' me, Son, dat Bible off de  
shelf—  
Hi! dese hyer specs keep gettin' wet—you'll have ter  
read yo'self.  
Turn ter my chapter; read me dat 'fo' I lay down ter  
res';  
It's 'bout de Shepherd an' de sheep out in de wilder-  
ness.

KEEP ER-GRINNIN'.

---

When you heah "Ole Tribberlation" come er tyarin'  
down de road,

An' you know he gwine ter kotch you an' you got ter  
byar de load;

When you feel his bridle pullin', an' de saddle on  
yo' back,

An' de whip is wavin' roun' you, an' er hittin', ev'y  
crack—

Den remember 'bout de possum whar wuz settin' on de  
lim',

Wid de gun er p'intin' at him, an' de dorgs er treein'  
him;

How he holler ter de hunter an' he holler ter de  
houn':

*"Ize er gwin'ter keep er-grinnin', doh I spec' you'll  
fotch me down."*

When you studies 'bout de bizness whar you's vested  
ev'y cent,

An' you see de sheriff comin' fer ter en' de argyment—

When yo' neighbors tek ter biddin' on yo' cabin an'  
yo' corn,

An' de auctioneer's er-holl'rin': "It's er gwine!  
gwine! gone!"

Den remember 'bout de possum whar wuz settin' on de  
lim',

Wid de gun er p'intin' at him, an' de dorgs er treein'  
him;

How he holler ter de hunter an' he holler ter de  
houn':

*"Ize er gwin'ter keep er-grinnin', doh I spec' you'll  
fotch me down."*

When you long has love er lady an' de time you's  
been er-part

She's er kep' er writin' ter you: "You's de honey uv  
my heart."

When you take an' draws yo' wages, an' you hurry  
an' you has'e,

An' you finds er-nother gem'man wid his arm  
er-roun' her wase—

Den remember 'bout de possum whar wuz settin' on de  
lim',

Wid de gun er p'intin' at him, an' de dorgs er treein'  
him;

How he holler ter de hunter an' he holler ter de  
houn':

*"Ize er gwin'ter keep er-grinnin', doh I spec' you'll  
fotch me down."*

When you feels er mighty mis'ry an' yo' stomach's  
kinder bent,

An' de doctor starts ter projec' wid de cuttin' in-  
stru-ment;

When he lays you on de table an' er standin' by yo'  
side,

He's er-twitchin' an' er-itchin' ter be whittlin' up  
yo' hide—

*Den* remember 'bout de possum whar wuz settin' on de  
lim',

Wid de gun er p'intin' at him, an' de dorgs er treein'  
him;

How he holler ter de hunter an' he holler ter de  
houn':

*"Ize er gwin'ter keep er-grinnin', doh I spec' you'll  
fotch me down."*

## DE OLE FIDDLER.

---

De moon peeps through de winder, it lights de cabin  
wall,

It falls 'pon top de fiddle, an' voices 'pear ter call;  
Dey soun' like far off people—like sperits in de  
moon,

Whar want de ole-time fiddler ter play er ole-time  
chune.

I heahs you callin', callin'. Yas Marsters, I gwine  
go—

Dis han' is mons'us trim'lin', it sca'ce can hol' de  
bow,

But I'll go ter de great-house, an' po'ly doh I feel,  
I'll play fer you dis Chris'mus, de ole "Virginny  
Reel."

Hyer I is, 'twix' de pillars, de fiddle in my han',  
De moonlight streamin' on me, befo' de doh I stan';  
De big oak grove is roun' me, de low-grounds  
lie in sight,

An' home, an' fields, an' hillsides gwine heah de  
Reel ternight.

Ah me! dem moonlit winders—dem 'flections on de  
pane—

Dey 'claims de fire is lighted, de folks is home  
ergain;

An' dem long limbs er-tappin' like feet dat trippin'  
go,

Dey says de folks is comin' ter dance de Reel once  
mo'.

Dem mus' be mo' 'en shadows whar move erbout de  
walk,

Dem mus' be mo' 'en pine trees whar talk dat lovers'  
talk;

An' dat ar soun' like satin, er-rustlin' 'cross er floh,  
Sho' dat ain' dead leaves stirrin' er-roun' de shet up  
doh.

'Tain' jes' er spell whar's on me—I ain' jes' crazy ole—  
I say de house ain' empty, de rooms ain' dark an'  
col'.

Can't I heah ladies talkin'? Can't I see all de light?  
Ain' dis me an' de fiddle? Ain' dis hyer Chris'mus  
night?

Dey's come! Dey's come fer Chris'mus, all dem whar  
went erway;

Dey's callin' fer de fiddler, dey wants ter heah him  
play.

I'll meet 'em an' I'll greet 'em—I'll 'scort 'em ter de  
floh—

Dis bow an' string gwine fyarly sing de Chris'mus  
chunes once mo'.

Git out hyer banjo-nigger, fling 'way dat plunkin'  
thing!

I cuts an' calls de figger, de fiddle is de king.

Jes' heah him talkin' tender, jes' heah his laughin'  
ring;

Prepyar yo' feet fer pattin', de fiddle's gwin'ter  
sing.

Choose yo' partners, gem'men all—gem'men all—  
gem'men all—

Choose yo' partners, gem'men all—partners fer de  
ball.

Tek yo' little sweetheart's han', tek an' hol' it  
while you can,

Doh she 'bleege' ter blush an' start wid de flut-  
t'rin' er de heart—

Dat ar heart you gwin'ter steal when she dances in de  
Reel.

Oh! how happy fiddlers feel—fiddlers feel—fiddlers  
feel—

Oh! how happy fiddlers feel when dey play de Reel.

Fus' two ladies down de lane —down de lane—down  
de lane—

Fus' two ladies down de lane—han's ercross an'  
back ergain—

Den de gem'men does de same, dat's de way ter  
play de game.

Gallavantin', flirtin', courtin', trippin', tippin', fyarly  
floatin',

Light as wind on toe an' heel, dat's de way ter dance  
de Reel.

Oh! how happy fiddlers feel—fiddlers feel—fiddlers  
feel—

Oh! how happy fiddlers feel when dey play de Reel.

Ev'y body march er-roun'—march er-roun'—march  
er-roun'—

Ev'y body march er-roun'—steppin' ter de fiddle's  
soun'

'Till yo' own true loves is foun'—kase you'll fin' 'em  
I be boun'.

Who-some-ever you mout seen, whar-some-ever  
you mout been,

You gwine meet 'em at de en'—meet yo' true  
loves, gentlemen.

Den de weddin' bells gwine peal at de endin' er de  
Reel.

Oh! how happy fiddlers feel—fiddlers feel—fiddlers  
feel—

Oh! how happy fiddlers feel when dey play de Reel.



## STUDY'N' 'BOUT CHRIS'MUS.

---

De Chris'mus uv de good ole times  
Is gone, an' dat's er fac';  
'Tain' nothin' 'tall dat I knows er  
Gwine bring dat Chris'mus back.

De niggers an' de white-folks now  
Is drif'in' wide erpart,  
An' love whar 'sisted 'twix' de two  
Is done desart de heart.

De niggers does like dey don' cyar;  
De white-folks 'pear ter say:  
"While we walks 'long on dis hyer paf  
You go 'long dat er way."

'Tain' no Ole Mistiss now ter please;  
'Tain' no Ole Marster's han'  
Ter 'spense ter darkies roun' de place  
De fatness er de lan.

'Tain' no big smoke-house, chock right full  
Er ham an' chine an' side,  
Ner celler whar de 'lasses flow,  
An' sperits allus bide.

'Tain' no mo' rations I kin draw,  
Ner clothes g'in me ter w'ar,  
'Tain' no white-folks gwi' mek aig-nogg  
An' save dis nigger's shar'.

Ole Mistiss done it, dat she did,  
She dip it out de bowl  
An' say: "Hyer, Silas, have er glass,  
De night is ve'y col'.

An' tek dis other ter Aun' Jane—  
Don't tas'e it, 'strain yo'self;  
I wants her too, at Chris'mus time,  
Ter drink her Marster's helf."

'Twuz mons'us hard ter cyar dat glass  
Fur as de cabin doh,  
Kase once you tas'es dat aig-nogg  
You gwine ter wan' some mo'.

An' Satan, too, keep temp'in' me;  
He try ter mek me think  
Dat half er glass sho' is ernough  
Fer women-folks ter drink.

But whar's de use uv dealin' wid  
De things an' times gone by—  
It jes' he'ps mek young niggers mad,  
An' ole ones wan' ter cry.

But how-some-never dat mout be,  
I hol' it ain' no crime  
Ter miss dem things I use' ter git  
At dat ole Chris'mus time.

Ef I had fifty cents dis night  
I'd burn dat Chris'mus lorg;  
I'd git de milk an' beat de aigs,  
An' mek me some aig-nogg,

An' time I got dem 'gredients mix'  
I'd lif' de glass, like dis—  
An' tek an' drene it ter de drugs  
In 'membrance ter "Ole Miss."

CHRIS'MUS IN MY BONES.

---

I done sold my load er hay,  
I done gone an' got de pay,  
I ain' gwine ter wuk ter-day—  
Chris'mus in my bones.

Dis hyer jug is full er rum,  
'Pears like Ize er-needin' some,  
Yas! I 'spec' de time done come—  
Chris'mus in my bones.

I hyers you gwine Glug! Glug! Glug!  
I don' need ter use no mug,  
I gwine fling 'way dis hyer plug—  
Chris'mus in my bones.

Dat's de stuff whar drowns yo' cyar,  
Dat's de juice whar makes you r'ar,  
Ize so happy! Wah! Hoop-la—  
Chris'mus in my bones.

Nor Suh, Marster! Who drunk? *Me?*  
Ize ez straight ez straight kin be.  
'Pears right strange dat you cyan' see—  
Chris'mus in my bones.

## DE OLE BATTERED BANJO.

---

When lone, 'fo' de fire, I sets in de evenin',  
An' studies 'bout pictures I sees in de flame,  
I feels like Ize back on Ole Marster's plantation,  
An' lives wid de darkies at quarters again.  
I smells de cook' possum, I tastes de roas' 'taters;  
I sees de gals grinnin' an' dancin' wid joy;  
An 'den I reach out fer ter finger de banjo,  
De ole battered banjo I played when a boy.  
De sweet singin' banjo, de clear ringin' banjo,  
De ole battered banjo I played when a boy.

I 'low dat dat banjo wan' much fer ter look at,  
Kase niggers an' chillun done handle' it rough,  
But Marster an' Mistiss dey love fer ter heah it,  
An' playin' fer dem two wuz pleasure sho 'nuff.  
Fer all de big parties an' dances an' weddin's  
Dis nigger de whi' folks would allus employ,  
An' how dey did dance when dey heah me a pickin'  
De ole battered banjo I played when a boy.  
De fun flingin' banjo, de gal slingin' banjo,  
De ole battered banjo I played when a boy.

Oh, gone is de days uv de dancin' an' singin';  
De quarters is ruin', de great house is clos';  
An' whar, in de ole times, de music wuz ringin'  
De high grass is growin' 'roun' shet cabin dohs.  
De banjo's head's bu'sted, de strings is all broken,  
De chilluns done taken its frame fer a toy;  
An' all de sweet voices whar j'ined in our chorus  
Is hush' like de banjo I played when a boy.  
De low sobbin' banjo, de tear bringin' banjo,  
De ole battered banjo I played when a boy.

Written for Polk Miller and sung by him. Music by  
Jacob Reinhardt.

## WAITIN' IN DE SUNSHINE.

---

De darkies all have wandered, an' lef' me hyer  
behind;

Dey wuz talkin' 'bout me might'ly, an' dey claim I  
los' my mind,

For dey say I wuz de bigges' fool-nigger dey ever  
saw,

Jes' kase I love de good white folks whar live  
befo' de war.

### CHORUS:

Gone, gone is all frum out de quarters an' de Hall;  
Gone, gone, de laughin' an' de joy.

As I sets hyer in de sun, my mind still studies 'pon  
Dem happy, happy times gone by.

I ain' got no mo' strength fer ter hill de growin'  
corn,

An' I feels so mons'us po'ly dat I wakes befo' de  
morn,

An' I has a kind o' 'spicion dat I'll lose my  
hyerin' soon

Kase I never heahs ole Ranger doh dey say he  
bays de moon.

CHORUS:

Gone, gone, etc.

Ize settin' hyer an' waitin' to kotch de welcome  
soun'

O' de angel dat will tek me whar de 'ternal res' is  
foun',

An' I ain't afeared ter foller kase I know he'll  
tek me sho',

An' Ize gwine ter keep on waitin' in de sunshine  
'fo' de doh.

CHORUS:

Gone, gone, etc.



## IZE BOUN' FER "OLE HANOVER."

---

Ize boun' fer "Ole Hanover", I live' dyar 'fo' de  
war;

Dyar's whar Ize had he happies' times dis nigger  
ever saw.

I knows de roads is miry, de creeks is runnin'  
high,

But down ter "Ole Hanover" I'll git, 'cep' 'tis I  
die.

I ain' got time ter projec', Ize 'bleege ter git erlong;  
Ize 'feared the dark will kotch me, an' some'n mout  
go wrong.

I done heah tell dat sperits roams roun' de swamp  
er nights,

De sperits er dem soldiers whar git kill' in de fights.

I dunno what dey does dyar, or what dey gwine  
ter say,

But you jes' heah me, honey, I wan' keep out de way.

Dey's fit once kase er niggers, an', I don' cyar who  
win,

I don' wan' no contention 'bout dis hyer nigger  
'gin.

I knows I ain' got nothin' on 'count er dat ar war,  
'Cep' 'tis dey allus gins me de full 'stent er de law.

In all er sech contentions what is de bone gwine  
get?

It 'pears like, mos' in gin'ral, de bone is gwine  
be et.

But sence I talks er eatin', I jes' wan' let you know  
Dat down in "Ole Hanover" is de place fer vittals,  
sho'.

Dey's allus killin' chickens, dey eats 'em ev'y  
day,

Dey's got so much fri' chicken dey flings de tough  
ones 'way.

An' as fer watermillons, dey's big ez ever grew;  
Ize got ter see dat nigger whar handles mo' 'en  
two.

Dese little eight-cent millons folks sells up in de  
town,

Down dyar dey's same ez nubbins and chillun  
kicks 'em roun'.

Ize got ter be er-movin', Ize ridin' "Shanks's myar,"  
Jes' kotch dat smell er vittals dey's cookin' way  
down dyar.

Ize comin', "Ole Hanover," I let you know Ize  
glad—

Save me some dat fri' chicken, I wants it mons'us  
bad.

## BRESH 'EM 'WAY.

---

When you fus' heah de buzzin' er de blues,  
    Bresh 'em 'way!  
It's er gwine ter tek heap mo' 'en sayin' "Shoos,"  
    Bresh 'em 'way!  
Sence dey scratches an' dey fights,  
An' you gits sick when dey bites,  
Sock it ter 'em 'fo' dey lights,  
    Bresh 'em 'way!

### CHORUS:

Bresh 'em 'way, oh my brother! Bresh 'em 'way!  
Don' you let 'em cotch er holt o' you an' stay.  
Wid dey sharp teef an' dey claws  
Dey jes digs in you an' gnaws,  
Bresh 'em 'way! Bresh 'em 'way! Bresh 'em 'way!

Time er lie start ter whisper, "Ize yo' man,"  
    Bresh it 'way!  
Time it promise fer ter he'p you all it can,  
    Bresh it 'way!  
Ef you let dat little lie  
Git its wings an' start ter fly  
It'll bite you bye-an'-bye.  
    Bresh it 'way!

### CHORUS:

Bresh it 'way, etc.

When de drink holler ter you "Hyer's yo' fren'!"

Bresh it 'way!

When it tell you, "You's ez strong ez other men."

Bresh it 'way!

'Fo' you stumble an' you stutter,

'Fo' you's flung inter de gutter,

'Fo' you's los' yo' bread and butter,

Bresh it 'way!

CHORUS:

Bresh it 'way, etc.

Ef tem'tation come an' ax you, "How you does?"

Bresh it 'way!

When it say, "Ize been er-wond'rin' whar you wuz."

Bresh it 'way!

Doh er sof', sweet-talkin' critter,

Dat's er powerful hard hitter,

It's de devil's own man-gitter.

Bresh it 'way!

CHORUS:

Bresh it 'way, etc.

## DE HOE-CAKE WALK.

---

De bull-frog jumps when he wants ter git erlong;  
De mockin'-bird hops 'fo' he larn ter sing er song;  
De ox is kinder willin' doh he gwine ter move  
slow,

But it teks er heap o' projic' ter mek er mule go.  
Dem critters ain' lackin' in de natchul parts,  
Dey jes' don' study 'fo' dey meks dey starts;  
Chillun got ter think 'fo' dey knows how ter talk,  
An' it teks edgycashun fer de Hoe-cake walk.

*Hoe-cake walk! Hoe-cake walk!*

*Git edgycashun fer de Hoe-cake walk.*

It gwine tek science, an' de way ter git de swing  
Is ter keep er-totin' water on yo' haid frum de  
spring;

An' when you done cotch it you gwine meet yo'  
match

Till you totes watermillons on yo' haid frum de  
patch.

Balancin' dem millons is mons'us hard ter do,  
But I kin tek an' tote 'em when I done eat two.

I jes' steps spry, an' I don' never balk.

O, I is de King o' de Hoe-cake walk.

*Hoe-cake walk! Hoe-cake walk!*

*I is de King er de Hoe-cake walk.*

You w'ars er white ves' fer ter git de right tone,  
You 'bleege ter look proud like de earth wuz yourn,  
You smiles at de gals, an' you bows perlite  
Doh you's counted mighty danj'us when you gits  
inter er fight.

I step so sof', an' I tread so true,  
De folks never 'spicions 'bout de razor in my shoe.  
Ef er nigger sass me he got ter walk chalk,  
I protects de ladies in de Hoe-cake walk.  
*Hoe-cake walk! Hoe-cake walk!*  
*Gran' promernade fer de Hoe-cake walk.*

De clos' I w'ars is all bran' new,  
(I knows white-folks whar is lookin' fer 'em too),  
I gits my style frum de quality folks;  
I gits my fun out de almanac jokes;  
I gits my strength out er eatin' hoe-cakes,  
An' I gits my sperits out de sperits I takes,  
But de possum I tackles wid de knife an' fork  
Dat supples up de j'int's fer de Hoe-cake walk.  
*Hoe-cake walk! Hoe-cake walk!*  
*Ile up de j'int's fer de Hoe-cake walk.*

Fotch out dem gals, I want ter crown de queen ;  
Bring de likesomes' nigger whar ever wuz seen.

Her lily white han' she'll lay in mine,  
An' de king an' de queen gwine march down de  
line.

I'll step ter de throne, an' set her dyar,  
Fix blood-red roses in her kinky hyar ;  
Ter de soun' er de fiddle, an' de poppin' er de cork  
I'll crown her de queen er de Hoe-cake walk.

*Hoe-cake walk! Hoe-cake walk!*

*Crown her de queen er de Hoe-cake walk.*

STUDY'N' HOW TER KEEP FRUM GITTIN'  
SHOOK DOWN.

---

When de win' blows hard an' de lim's all lurch  
De bird is a bird whar kin stick ter de perch,

An' in dese times when we all gits jolts,

We's doin' mighty well jes' holdin' our holts,  
Still ev'ybody wants fer ter clim' up de tree,

An' see fer deyselves what de "Tip-tops" see,

But time dat we reach ter de very fus' roun',

We's study'n' how ter keep frum gittin' shook  
down.

Gittin' shook down,

Gittin' shook down,

From de top o' de tree right plum' ter de groun',

We's study'n' how ter keep frum

Gittin'

Shook

Down.



In de ways we clim's an' de ways we clings  
We sho is de kin o' de fo'-laig things,  
An' gittin' ter groun', we jes' soon tread  
On dis hyer one's ne'k er dat ar one's head ;  
An' pullin' folks' laigs, an' ridin' folks' backs,  
Doh jumpin' an' joltin', we sticks ter de tracks,  
But lookin' fer licks we don' sleep soun',  
We's study'n' how ter keep frum gittin' shook  
down.

Gittin' shook down,

Gittin' shook down,

Frum de top o' de tree right plum' ter de groun',  
We's study'n' how ter keep frum

Gittin'

Shook

Down.

GRASSHOPPERS.

---

Yas! I see de sporty butler whar is w'arin' white-  
folks' clothes,

An' I see too, dat perliceman whar is watchin'  
whar he goes—

Now er little bird done tol' me, an' he say it  
mighty nice:

“Dyar's er hoppergrass er-hoppin',  
*An' he hoppin' on de ice.*”

Ya-s! I know dat high up preacher whar has got  
his praises sung

Kase de realms er gloom an' glory he's er-'splorin'  
wid his tongue,

But er little bird done tol' me, an' he say it mighty  
nice:

“Dyar's er hoppergrass er-hoppin',  
*An' he hoppin' on de ice.*”

Y-a-s! Ize played dat crapshus nigger whar is got  
de dice an' cup,

An' he flung de seven erleven ev'y time he shake  
'em up,

But er little bird done tol' me, an' he say it mighty  
nice:

“Dyar's er hoppergrass er-hoppin',  
*An' he hoppin' on de ice.*”

Y-a-s! Ize 'quainted wid de gem'man whar, ter  
mek his sperits calm,

Slips erway frum home 'fo' bre'kfast fer ter git er  
sip er dram,

But er little bird done tol' me, an' he say it mighty  
nice:

"Dyar's er hoppergrass er-hoppin',  
*An' he hoppin' on de ice.*"

Y-a-s! It 'pears Ize flingin' brickbats, an' I 'spec'  
I better quit,

Doh, er course, 'tain' none my hearers whar de caps  
is gwine ter fit—

But er little bird done tol' me, an' he say it mighty  
nice:

"You's er hoppergrass er-hoppin',  
*An' you's hoppin' on de ice.*"

DE SHUCKIN' O' DE CORN.

---

My brothers and my sisters,  
On dis sunny Sabbath morn  
Ize in min' ter do some preachin'  
'Bout de Shuckin' o' de Corn,  
An' Ize gwine ter mek it p'inted,  
An Ize gwine ter say it plain—  
*Dyar's er monst'us mess o' shuckin',  
But er mighty little grain.*

Y'all knows de corn-stalk speakers  
Whar jes' spring up out de groun',  
How dey shakes dey top-knot tassels  
Whar-some-never crowds is foun'.  
Well, if y'all will tek an' shuck 'em,  
In de barn-house o' de brain—  
*Dyar's er monst'us mess o' shuckin',  
But er mighty little grain.*

Y'all buys de Sunday papers  
Fer ter git de gwines-on;  
How de rustle o' dat fodder  
Meks you 'spec' ter git some corn.  
Well, on time de leaves is open,  
An' you gathers up yo' gain—  
*Dyar's er monst'us mess o' shuckin',  
But er mighty little grain.*

Y'all goes down ter de cote-house  
Whar dey brings de folks ter taw,  
An' you heahs er lot o' lawyers  
Keep er holl'rin' at de law,  
An' ef den you calls de doctors  
Dey gwine projec' wid yo' pain—  
*Dyar's er monst'us mess o' shuckin',  
But er mighty little grain.*

Now Ize name' de main 'lustrations,  
An' you knows Ize name' 'em true,  
But befo' I ends dis 'pistle  
Ize er-p'intin' it at you;  
So, er standin' hyer, I axes:  
"Is de sunshine an' de rain  
*Jes' er-makin' you all shuckin's  
Or er-pilin' up yo' grain?"*

My brothers and my sisters,  
Jes' ez sho' ez you is born,  
Right behin' yo' backs, folks shuck you  
All de same ez shuckin' corn,  
An' ef you is little nubbins,  
Den yo' growin's all in vain;  
*Folks ain' gwine count yo' shuckin's;  
Dey's er-gwine ter count yo' grain.*

UNCLE JOE.

---

Young Marster, please don' call me "Brown,"  
Don' say it any mo',  
Wid my white-folks I ain' name dat,  
I jes' is "Uncle Joe."

I knows you wan' ter be perlite,  
An' thought I'd like it too,  
But when you used dat titlement  
It didn' soun' like you.

I 'lows I likes fer color'd folks  
Ter call me "Brother Brown,"  
It soun' like Ize er-gittin' up  
Instid er drappin' down.

An' when I gits in my black clos',  
Puts on my beaver hat,  
Er han's de plate erbout in chu'ch,  
I feels whar I is at.

It sho does mek me kinder proud  
Ter stan' an' look er-roun',  
An' heah de sisters whisperin',  
"Jes' look at Deacon Brown."

But when de flick'rin' cabin fire  
Shows faces in de glow,  
I sets an' studies 'bout de ones  
Whar call me "Uncle Joe."

I racolec' when you wuz small,  
An' I wuz gittin' on,  
But I wuz still what I call young,  
Doh fifty years wuz gone.

I tuk an' hel' you on my knee;  
Wuz tellin' you 'bout byars;  
When you saw', shinin' in my haid,  
De very fus' grey hyars.

You ax' me den, how ole I wuz,  
You talk so grave an' slow,  
An' when I tol' you "fifty years,"  
You call' me "Uncle Joe."

Dat come jes' like er blessin' Suh,  
It soun' like we wuz kin;  
It made me feel dat love wuz deep—  
Heap deeper den de skin.

An' what you call' me folks tuk up,  
Miss Jane, an' Sue, an' May;  
Seem like dey all wuz claimin' kin,  
A new one ev'y day.

Gawd bless dey little chillun hearts.

I lov'd 'em, dat dey knowed,  
An' I b'leeve dat wuz why de name  
Tuk sech er root an' growed.

I ain' fergot how we all wuz,  
I never gwine fergit;  
My book er 'membrance reads ez plain  
Ez when it fus' wuz writ.

De folks like you an' me, Marse John,  
Dey's few now, mons'us few;  
An' therefo', doh de times is change',  
Dey shan' change me an' you.

So don' you call me "Brown," Marse John,  
Don' say it any mo',  
Wid my white-folks I don' name dat,  
I jes' is "Uncle Joe."



## LITTLE MISTISS.

---

“Little Mistiss,” hyer I is,  
Ize settin’ by yo’ grave.  
I sees de shadows dance an’ play  
Jes’ time de cedars wave.  
I sees ’em, an’ it calls to min’  
How full o’ play you was,  
An’ studyn’ ’bout de like o’ dat  
Mos’ breaks my heart, it does.

“Little Mistiss,” spring’s done come;  
De sky is cl’ar an’ blue;  
De birds is singin’ all de songs  
Dey sung las’ year to you;  
Dey sings like dey wan’ cheer me up,  
But while I hoe de corn  
De win’ keep whisperin’ in de pines—  
“De little Mistiss gone.”

De a’r is full o’ sweetness now;  
De blooms is on de trees,  
An’ roun’ de honey-suckle vine  
I heahs de buzzin’ bees.  
De grass is long an’ sof’ an’ green,  
An’ ev’y growin’ thing  
I’s puttin’ out an’ ’pearin’ like  
It know’d dat dis was spring.

Tain' so wid me, nor dat it aint,  
Dyars some'n says to me,  
Dat doh de spring's done come ag'in,  
Tain' what it use' to be.  
I feels like winter still was hyer;  
It's mons'us hard to l'arn  
Dat spring can come, and flowers can bloom  
Wid "Little Mistiss" gone.

I misses, out de new plow' groun',  
De tracks o' little feet;  
De echoes 'spondin' through de woods  
Yo' laugh, so clear an' sweet;  
Yo' han', whar use' to cotch hol' mine,  
An lemme lead you 'long  
De big ole long stretch' 'cross de creek  
Whar you was 'feared wan' strong.

You don' go wid me fer de cows,  
An' walk right by my side,  
Or come home on ole Brindle's back  
Jes' like you use' to ride.  
I miss you ev'ywhar I turns;  
Still I fergit you's gone,  
An' 'spec's to see you any time  
Come runnin' through de corn.

An' doh Ize dis'p'inted heap,  
I listens for de soun'  
An' 'lows dat ef you ain' right dyar  
You's somewhar playin' roun'.  
I knows dat I gwi' see yo' face,  
I knows I'll heah yo' voice,  
Kase some'n you done tol' me 'bout  
Is made dis heart rejoice.

I think I heahs you sing dat hymn  
'Bout Jesus byarin' sin,  
An' how he's tol' 'em at de gates  
To let po' sinners in.  
An' doh ole Satan 'rassle like  
He wan' to fling me down,  
Ize sho dat when de fight is done  
Ize gwine to git my crown.

MAMMY'S CHARGE.

---

My heart is mos' broke, Judy, an' my haid is achin'  
bad,

Dis is de sor'ful's evenin', honey, dat I is ever had.

Dey knowed I love dat dear sweet chile, an' now  
her Mummer's daid

Dey could trus' her ole black mammy fer ter treat  
her good, dey said.

So dey lef' me in de nu's'ry fer ter keep de chile up  
dyar,

But I still could heah de service, an' de preacher  
read de pra'r;

De chile too kotch de singin', an' de tears I had  
ter hide,

When, in play she kep' on 'peatin', "O Lord, wid  
me abide."

When de fune'al it wuz over, an' de hearse wuz  
driv' away,

I try might'ly fer ter 'muse her, an' ter keep her  
dyar at play,

But she 'sist on askin' questions like, "Whar is  
my Farver gone?"

I wants ter see my Mummer; will she stay 'way  
frum me long?"

I cyar' her ter de winder, an' she look' out in de  
street,

'Tel she got so tired waitin' dat she went right fas'  
asleep;

But I set dyar in de twilight an' I hel' de little  
dear,

'Tel de street wuz on'y darkness, an' de stars  
begin ter 'pear.

Den one star come out, Judy, whar I never sees  
befo',

An' I look at it so studdy dat de tears wuz 'bleege ter  
flow;

Den I tu'n an' see my darlin', in her sleep, begin  
ter smile;

An de new star seem' a-shinin' right down upon  
de chile.

AFTER THE WAR.

---

Good mornin'! Ize 'Lijer, Marse William—  
I hopes you is well, Suh, terday.  
Ize needin' er pyar er de ole shoes  
You's study'n' 'bout flingin' erway.

Ain' got none! Well dat is er pity.  
Now what is I gwine fer ter do?  
'Tain' showin' my 'spec' fer "Ole Marster"  
Ter walk er-roun' hyer wid one shoe.

Er-knowin' dat one er his sarvants  
Whar done fer him all dat he could,  
Was gwine er-roun' 'beggin' dis hyer way,  
He'd turn in de grave, dat he 'ud.

I dunno how 'tis, Marster William—  
I don' 'pear ter fit in no whar,  
I gits wid de new issue niggers,  
But sholy, my people ain' dyar.

Dey dresses jes' like dey wuz monkeys;  
Dey quarrels an' gits inter fights;  
Dey stands in de way er de ladies,  
An' claims dat dey's 'sertin' dey rights.

Dey talks mighty heap erbout larnin';  
Dey mek out ole niggers is fools—  
I lay I could tek an' spen' money  
On some'n heap better'n schools.

Young niggers ain' needin' no teachin'  
Like ole uns needs vittals an' meat—  
I tell you, sence gittin' my freedom,  
Ize scrambled fer some'n ter eat.

Den too, Suh, jes' look at de white-folks—  
Dey's changin' frum what dey once wuz;  
Er-tryin' so hard ter mek money  
Dey loses dey manners, dey duz.

I ax 'em fer some'n ernother;  
Dey look like dey'd bite me in two,  
Dey tell me, "Go long ter de po'-house,  
We ain' gwine be pester'd wid you."

I looks roun' fer some dem whar know'd me,  
But, Marster, I finds dat dey's gone—  
I call out de names like I use' ter,  
But nothin' 'cep' echoes den 'spon'.

Dey's sleepin' in graves at de "ole place,"  
An' hyer dey has left me behin'—  
I wish I wuz res'in' 'longside 'em,  
It 'pears like it's time I wuz gwine.

THE RACE QUESTION.

---

When I wuz young de color'd folks  
Wuz 'low'd ter lay de bricks;  
Dey climbed de scaffolds, toted hods,  
An' made de mortar mix.

Dey'd handle hammers, saws an' planes,  
An' any tools dey'd choose—  
It wan' no folks 'cep' niggers den  
Whar use' ter half-sole shoes.

In dem dyar times 'twuz nigger backs  
Whar gave de scythes de swing;  
'Twuz big, black, shiny nigger arms  
Whar made de anvils ring.

An' settin' on de wooden horse  
Wid staves betwix' dey laigs,  
Wid drawin' knives an' hic'ry poles  
De niggers hooped de kaigs.

You couldn' fin' no barber shop  
Dat we-all folks wan' dyar—  
De little ones er-shinin' shoes,  
The big ones cuttin' hyar.



Wid high up gem'man names print' on  
De mugs er-settin' roun';  
Er heap o' niggers made dey piles  
Frum shaves an' breshin' down.

But 'tain' so now, nor dat it aint,  
De white-folks cuts us out;  
Dey jumps right in an' gits de wuk  
'Fo' we knows what dey's 'bout.

Dey 'trac's de trade—dem out-land folks—  
Dem 'Talian, Dutch, an' Greeks,  
Aldo' 'tain' none whar understands  
De 'spressions whar dey speaks.

Dey shaves an' shampoos all day long,  
Dey never, never stops—  
Dey don' pick banjers fer dey fr'en's,  
An' cake-walk in de shops.

De Orishman is wuss er all—  
Jes' time er nigger nod,  
He step right up an' shev' him down  
An' grab er hol' his hod.

An' den de Unions layin' bricks,  
Dey hollers out ter Mike—  
"Ef dat dyar nigger gits dat hod,  
We-all is gwine ter strike."

Den ev'y body on de job  
Er-j'inin' in de fray,  
Jes' tells de niggers, up an' down,  
Ter go 'long out de way.

De bosses don' cyar nothin' 'tall;  
Dey say we's mighty slow;  
Dey kinder laugh an' 'lows it's time  
De nigger got ter go.

An' ef we turns den ter de farms,  
Whar we had ought ter been,  
We dyar gwine find some big machines  
Fer us ter buck erg'in.

Dey's took an' drove out all de scythes—  
I 'clar, it is er crime  
Ter reap, wid one dem whirlin' things,  
De whole crop at er time.

'I know we's gittin' mighty larned—  
Folks say we's making has'e;  
Dyar's heap o' sass an' argyment  
'Bout "Progress er de Race."

I 'lows we' settin' up de tree—  
De nigger's on er boom—  
But I wan' know whar 'bouts is I  
Gwine git some elbow room.

Er-study'n' 'bout one question, Suh,  
Nigh bu'sts my brain 'jints loose.  
"Is niggers now er-cotchin' holt,  
Er is dey off de roos'?"

RECONSTRUCTION.

---

I know dey tuk de bottom rail  
An' put it on de top,  
But, ever sence, dat's been de rail  
Ter whittle on an' chop.

De men whar tuk an' put it dyar  
Know'd niggers ain' got sense;  
Dey fix it so jes' dey deyselves  
Could set 'pon top de fence.

Dey open carpet-bags up dyar,  
Dey eat up all de pies,  
An' wuss den dat, dey done it too,  
Right 'fo' de niggers' eyes.

So many folks set on dat rail  
It soon got mighty bent,  
An' 'bout dat time er some'n' 'curred  
Whar wan' no axerdent.

De white rail crope frum 'neath de fence—  
It hit de black—ker-flop!  
An' time de nigger cotch his sense  
De top *wuz* on de top.

I don' wan' be no top rail now;  
De bottom suits dis chile—  
Ize study'n how ter be de las'  
Whar's flung inter de pile.

I teks an' lets de white-folks 'lone;  
I don' wan' make no slips—  
De black rail buttin' 'g'inst de white  
Mout git pick' up in chips.

THE PESSIMIST.

---

Nor Suh, de times ain' what dey wuz,  
    An' dey's gittin' mighty bad ;  
De craps is all done bu'nt right up,  
    An' de chills is de wuss we's had ;  
You cyarn' git money out er nobody hyer,  
    An' de folks keeps gwine ter law ;  
Ain' nothin' 'tall in de county, Suh,  
    Like 'twuz "befo' de War."

Niggers is edgyated now,  
    An' dey ain' gwine wuk no moh ;  
Dey holds dey haid so mons'us high  
    Dey don't wan' tech de hoe ;  
Dey sets on de fence an' talks all day,  
    An' dey'll gin you sass an' jaw ;  
Dey ain' got de 'spect fer de white-folks, Suh,  
    Whar dey had "befo' de War."

De fox an' de mink eats all de hens,  
An' de horgs root holes in de road;  
Dat blame' ole mule bus' de gyarden fence,  
An' de rats gnaw' inter de boa'd;  
De crows dey comes an' steal all de corn—  
Dyar now, you kin hyer 'em caw;  
It 'pears dat de critters is meaner, Suh,  
Den dey wuz "befo' de War."

'Tain' no peaches in de orchard dis year,  
An' de turnips is de size o' er ball,  
An' Ize sartin sho', if de weather keeps up,  
De 'bacca gwine be ruin' 'fo' de fall;  
De watermillons dey ain' no count,  
Dey's smalles' I ever saw;  
Don' none de things grow big hyer, Suh,  
Like dey did "befo' de War."

RUMINATIONS.

---

Er-ramblin' down de road er life  
You's got ter 'counter storm an' strife;  
So tote 'long wid you some de balm  
What he'ps ter keep men's sperits calm.  
Nor, 'tain' no dram  
Dat meks folks r'ar,  
It's 'bacca, Sah.

Den when de times is pretty hard,  
An' you ain' got no fr'en'ly pard,  
An' crops is gittin' wuss and wuss,  
An' you's erfeared you's gwine ter bus',  
An' want ter cuss—  
Right dyar, instid,  
Bite off er quid.

Or ef de gal you's courted heap,  
Yawns 'fo' yo' eyes an' draps ter sleep,  
An' by de time you say, "Good-bye,"  
You's flung so fur an' kicked so high  
You want ter die—  
De time is ripe  
Ter light er pipe.



An' when de boss has call' you in,  
 An' starts lambastin' wid his chin,  
     An' says yo' wuk is mons'us po',  
     An' he don' want you any mo',  
         You's got ter go—  
     Jes' tek er chaw,  
     An' let him jaw.

An' ef de doctor say ter you:  
 "Quit all de things you want ter do;  
     Quit drinkin' any drink dat's good,  
     Quit eatin' ev'y kind er food,  
         You starve de germs out er yo' blood."  
     Den, brother, shout,  
     "I'll *smoke* 'em out."

CONTENTMENT.

---

Gimme fus' er wood fire  
Fer ter toas' my shin,  
Gimme nex' a big chair  
Fit fer res'in' in.

Gimme den my houn' dorg  
Settin' down by me;  
Fill up full my jimmy-john—  
Full as full can be.

Lemme me pick my banjer,  
Lemme eat my pone,  
Lemme me smoke my cob-pipe,  
Den—jes lemme 'lone.

## THE POINT OF VIEW.

---

Brer Possum he kin lick Brer Coon,  
Brer Coon kin lick Brer Houn',  
An' ev'ybody knows Brer Houn'  
Kin bring Brer Possum down.

Er nigger frum er sideshow, once,  
He come an' say ter me:  
"We's got er possum, houn', an' coon  
Fer our menagerie.

We cotch 'em out hyer in de woods  
When we wuz haulin' lorgs,  
An' we's in min' ter raise 'em up  
Like edgycated horgs.

We wants ter teach 'em how ter march,  
We'd give mos' anything  
Ef dey would march like soldiers does,  
Jes dem three in er ring.

We puts Brer Possum 'fo' Brer Houn',  
'Hin' Brer Houn', Brer Coon step;  
Dat brings Brer Possum 'hin' Brer Coon,  
An' den we hollers—'Hep!'

Brer Houn' he grabs Brer Possum's tail,  
Brer Possum don' tu'n roun';  
Instid he grabs er-holt Brer Coon,  
Brer Coon he grabs Brer Houn'.

Wid all dem critters holdin' holt,  
Jes' time Brer Possum squeal  
De whole caboodle's j'ined in one,  
An' whirlin' like er wheel.

Now, Ize done come ter ax you, Suh,  
Whar is er man o' peace,  
How can we 'range dem critters so  
Dat fightin's gwine ter cease?"

I up, an' tol' dat circus man:  
"Ize glad dat you's come 'roun';  
I'll tek dis 'casion fer ter 'splain,  
An' also fer ter 'spoun'.

Brer Possum he kin lick Brer Coon,  
Brer Coon kin lick Brer Houn',  
Still ev'ybody knows Brer Houn'  
Kin fotch Brer Possum down.

De on'y way you gwine have peace,  
Is so ter mek 'em front,  
Dat ev'y critter's gwine ter see  
Er giant 'stead o' runt.

De wildes' critters in de woods  
Is got dis tex' in min',  
"When danger's gwine on befo'  
Don' never look behin'."

I tol' you I wuz gwine ter 'splain,  
An' likewise fer ter 'spoun',  
You'll never git dem critters right  
Untwel you tu'ns 'em 'roun'.

Brer Possum skeered Brer Houn' gwine bite,  
Brer Coon ain' gwin'ter fail  
Ter 'member 'bout what happens when  
He tech Brer Possum's tail.

An' ole Brer Coon 'pear ter Brer Houn'  
Er lion in de paf;  
So when he see him he gits col',  
Like niggers in er baf.

De 'rangement, possum, houn', an' coon  
Is gwin'ter stan' fer war.  
De 'rangement, possum, coon, an' houn'  
Gwine stan' fer peace an' law.

So when de critters in de camp  
Is itchin' fer er fight,  
Jes' 'range each one ter come behin'  
De wrong one fer ter bite.

An' time you does, dem fightin' beasts  
Will see what dey gwine see,  
An' change dey looks 'twel dey looks like  
Faith, Hope, an' Charity."

So den I 'nounce dis mighty tex',  
Doh it ain' nothin' new,  
*Ter be fer peace er be fer war*  
*'Pends on de point o' view.*

## THE DUCK

---

I sho' will tell de gorspel truth, 'cordin' de oath I  
tuk,

You don' spose I gwine tell a lie, jes' fer ter git er  
duck?

Besides, I don' need tell no lie when truth will  
sarve de same,

Kase mine sho' is de righteous cause—dat nigger  
ain' got no claim.

'Tis dis er way I got dat duck. Me an' dat gal  
er mine

Was eatin' millions in de yard an' flingin' 'way de  
rine,

An' dat dyar duck keep peepin' twix' de palin's er  
de fence,

An' den it traspas in de yard—it stay dyar  
ever sence.

It wan' no bigger'n my fis' when fus' it come in  
dyar,

An' one de laigs wuz crimp up so dey didn' look  
like a pyar;

It had de yaller feathers still, an' kinder shet one  
eye,

An' when I see it standin' dyar, I say, "*Dat duck  
gwine die.*"

I never did lodge no complaint, I did'n' wan' raise  
no fuss;

But when it peered so mighty sick, an' gittin' wuss  
an' wuss,

I sorter s'picioned how some time great trouble I  
gwine see

Jes' kase I 'lowed dat sickly duck ter come an'  
live on me.

It sleep right underneath de house an' eat all  
kind er truck,

An' my ole 'ooman doctored it, an' Mimy nussed  
de duck.

Dat gal los' edycashun, Suh, she acted like a  
fool;

Fer ev'y time de duck got sick she stay erway  
frum school.

I ain' no lawyer, but I knows dat I kin argyfy.

Ef dat ar nigger says I steals, I tells him he's er lie.

I gwine hev justice in dis case—some questions  
I wan' ax,

An' ef he thinks dat he's so smart, jes' let him  
'spute de facts.

When niggers creeps inter de yard, an' totes de  
ducks away,

De p'leeceman cyar 'em ter de cage, an' dyar dey  
got ter stay;



But, sposen doh, I has er fence, an' dat man's  
    duck bus' through  
An' steals tomatis off de vine—den what de law  
    gwine do?

An' when de duck come traspassin' in dat ar yard  
    er mine,  
It wan' no use ter warrant it, fer who gwine pay de  
    fine?  
Fer all de time dat duck stay dyar, nigh on six  
    months an' moh,  
Dat nigger got ter pay de boa'd, an' dat is sartin  
    sho'.

I tells him I gwine charge him too, fer physic dat it  
    tuk,  
An' edycashun my gal los' er nussin' er de duck.  
I counts in all de heaps er cyars an' sponsibility  
Er keepin' dat ar sickly duck dat he shove off on  
    me.

Dyar's one 'lustration I wan' make—Yes Suh, I  
    mos' is through—  
How Solomon, de King, he say, "Jes chop de chile  
    in two!"  
An' ef you bleegeed ter split dat duck, ter foller  
    jestice' paf,  
I makes de pint, *I fatten it, an' claims de bigges' half.*

## THE KING CORN MAN.

---

I teks dis 'casion fer ter rise  
An' 'nounce *I'll* git de "King Corn Prize,"  
    Whar's offered fer de bigges' corn;  
    Bekase ez sho' ez you is born  
Ize got de very bigges' ear  
Dat folks is ever see 'roun' hyer.

An' I wan' tell you too, my brother,  
Dat I ain' nary farmer nother.  
    I never wuz no country man,  
    Nor ploughed de smalles' patch er lan'.  
I couldn' tell er' bacco seed  
Frum dat whar grows de Jimson-weed.

But still I sez ter you, "Dorg-gone,  
Ef I don' git dat prize fer corn."  
    Soon ez I heah 'bout dat ar prize  
    I scratch my haid an' shet my eyes,  
An' study out de champion plan  
Fer crownin' me de "King Corn Man."

Ize done heah tell dat 'long de streams,  
In special, Suh, de "noble Jeems,"  
    De farmer folks, fer heap er years,  
    Been settin' out de roas'in'-ears;  
An' so I say right dyar: "Dorg-gone,  
Ef I don' 'zamine all dat corn."

So den I took it, foot-in-han',  
An' start' ter tromp de farmin' lan',  
    Untwel de low-groun's show' my track  
    From Botetourt ter Accomac.  
An' doh er heap o' snakes I see',  
An' farmers' dorgs got arter me,

An', hyer an dyar, erlong de route  
I stop' ter git de chiggers out,  
    An' I pass' thro' er mess er crops  
    Wid ears like dem de chillun pops,  
I never see' er great big ear  
I didn' stole it fer "de Fyar."

Now, what's de good er puttin' on  
Dem big-bug men ter jedge folks' corn  
    When ev'y farmer, brought ter scratch,  
    Gwi' bring de leavin' er his patch?  
While I, de King's got hyer ter show  
De bigges' corn dat each kin grow.

Pears like, ter me, dat's was'in' talk;  
De corn's been jedged, Suh, on de stalk.  
    An' so I seys ergin, "Dorg-gone,  
    Ef I don' git dat prize fer corn."

THE TRAVELERS.

---

My brothers, we's er trav'lin' like de critters in de Ark,  
An' er part de time it's daylight, an' er part de time  
it's dark,

An' de ocean's dyar ter git us ef we don' stick ter de  
ship,

So we goes wid fear an' trim'lin' fer de mos' part  
o' de trip.

We lives in little cages whar we daily walks er-roun',  
An' we sometimes has de 'spicion dat we's gittin' over  
groun',

But time we tek our byarin's an' we ca'culate de  
sum,

We finds de place we 'rives at is de place frum  
whar we come.

Like owls some totes dey wisdom in de faces whar dey  
meks,

An' gits er name fer larnin' kase dey eyebrows look  
like specks,

Dey can do er lot er screechin' when dey's talkin'  
'bout de night,

But dey sets an' don' say nothin' when de time has  
come fer light.

Dyar's some whar's like de tigers—mons'us res'less in  
de cage,  
An' de things whar's sent ter hol' 'em is de things  
whar mek 'em rage,  
'Stead er gittin' down ter business an' er-playin'  
in de show,  
Dey's er-chawin' at de i'on an' er-pawin' at de doh.

Den er heap is like de monkeys whar is clim'in' fer de  
top,  
An' de other monkeys grab 'em, an' dey try ter mek  
'em stop,  
But de waves o' tribulation give de ship er mighty  
lurch  
An' de mess o' clim'in' monkeys come er tum'lin'  
off de perch.

Dyar is some whar 'sables goslin's in de way dey  
march behin'  
De ones whar goes befo' 'em, doh dey don' know whar  
dey's gwine;  
Jes' steppin' in de goose-tracks er de father goes  
de son,  
An' he never does do nothin' dat his daddy didn'  
done.

Yas, we's mighty like dem critters whar was trav'lin'  
in de Ark,  
De top-deck ones is frozen an' de bottoms in de dark,  
An' de middles dey is 'spicious dat de vittals won'  
go roun',  
So dey watches all dey neighbors kase dey's  
feared dey'll fling em down.

We's er-floatin' an' er-drif'in', but we's bleege ter reach  
de sho',  
An we knows de time is comin' when it ain' gwine rain  
no mo',  
When we'll see de lighthouse shinin' by de wharf o'  
Ararat,  
An' we'll look down frum de mountain an' we'll  
know whar we is at.

I rec'on den de top-decks gwine ter thaw er little bit ;  
De bottoms, down in darkness, gwine be lifted out de  
pit ;  
De middles won' be scramblin' an' er-scufflin' in de  
pen,  
But dey'll roam roun' in de gyarden an' dey'll git  
er plenty den.

I rec'on den de monkie will be 'lowed ter clim' up  
high,

De owls gwine tek ter smilin' kase dey'll see de  
sunny sky,

De tiger gwine be quiet an' as frien'ly as de cat  
When de rain it quits er rainin' an' we gits ter  
Ararat.

DE POT WHAR CALL' DE KITTLE BLACK.

---

De pot, whar call' de kittle black,  
Look' in de glass an' tuk it back.  
He saw hissself dat he wan' bright,  
An' so he say :—"Cn secon' sight,  
I don' b'leeve dat dyar kittle's black,  
It looks like me, an' dat's er fac';  
An' I spec' too, Ize gwine ter fin'  
Ole kittle's heart is 'bout like mine."

We ain't er-wearin' on de face  
De happy, shiny look o'grace,  
Kase axerdent an' sarcumstance  
Done lead us sich er devil's dance,  
We's got on us er coat o' paint  
Whar meks us look like what we aint;  
Ther'fo', o' course, dis row done riz  
'Bout what we aint an' what we is.

We'd like ter shine up in de light  
Like table things whar's clean an' white,  
An' kep' erway frum all de grime;  
But me an' kittle, mos' de time,  
Is got ter set wid coal an' coke  
An' fire an' flame an' dus' an' smoke;  
Wid burnin's out an' bilin's in  
We git ter look like home-made sin.



But, how-some-never way we look,  
We face de fire an' we cook  
Jes' like we's put hyer fer ter do,  
An' on de fire we sing some too;  
But easy times wa'n' made fer us,  
We's doin' well ef we don' bus'.

Now, dat dyar plate thinks she's all right,  
Er-settin' dyar, an' lookin' white.  
She ain' done nothin' all de day  
'Cep' settin' lookin' dat dyar way;  
Jes' waitin' fer ter grab er hol'  
O' what we cooks, befo' it's col',

An' tote it whar de folks kin see,  
Er-sayin':—"Now, jes' look at me!  
What splendid vittals I is got,  
Er-bringin' ter you, pipin' hot!  
I hope dat you gwine 'preciate  
De mighty labor o' de plate."

An' dyar an' den dat sassy liar,  
What never face no smoke er fire,  
Gits all de praise fer what is et—  
De produce o' our wuk an' sweat—  
An' folks all 'lows dat glory great  
Is what's done fer 'em by de plate.

Dey don' see nothin' 'bout de pot ;  
Him an' de kittle's lef' fergot.

An' so it is, jes' like I say,

"Good looks gwine git de praise terday."

But I wan' ax, wid pain an' sorrow,

Whar 'bouts dat plate gwine be termorrow?

Jes' let her git off dat dyar shelf,

An' start ter circulate herself

In all dis kitchen mix an' mess,

She gwine have 'ventures. I be bless

Ef she don' fin' dis worl' is rough,

An' dem whar's in it mighty tough.

An' few dyar be whar don' git bent

By sarcumstance an' axerdent.

One time de fire scotch her back

You'll see her wrinkle up an' crack,

An' all dat face whar use' ter shine

In ev'y spot gwine sho' de line

Whar tribulation tuk an' tromp,

An' stomp' his hoof an' lef' er stomp.

Hyer now! Ize talkin' 'bout de plate

Jes' like I done 'bout my bes' mate,

Ole kittle, when I call him black,

An' doin' it behin' her back.

Kin I jedge what she ought ter be?  
Ain' we made different, her an' me?  
I tek back mos' de things I said.  
Poor plate! She mighty tender made,  
An' still she always got ter shine.  
'Tain' none de people gwine ter min'  
De pot's face showin' some de sut,  
But let er plate git jes' one smut,

Somebody's sartin sho' ter shout,  
"Dat plate is dirty, take her out!"  
An' arter dat her only hope  
Is in de wash-rag an' de soap;  
An' even den, folks is so mean,  
Dey axes, "Does you 'spec' she's clean?"  
Ef once she slip, an' has er fall—  
Good-bye forever, an' ter all.

Dyar 'tis, she's crush'—er mighty smash—  
An' ev'ybody's heah'd de crash,  
An' dem whar's nigh her gits de broom  
An' sweeps her quick, right out de room,  
An' hides her twell she pass erway  
Wid all de ashes an' de clay.  
De pot whar call' de kittle black  
Look' in de glass an' tuk it back.



# MONOLOGUES



## AUNT DINAH AT THE FAIR.

---

Well, I declar', ef dyar ain' Jane! I didn' know she  
wuz hyer.

Oh! come 'long, Son, stan' out de way—you'll git run  
over, Suh!

It 'pears like we ain' got no rights when sech as dis  
is 'lowed,

An' good-fer-nothin'-po'-white-trash come ridin'  
through de crowd.

Hi Jane! Oh, Jane! Hyer! Hyer we is! Jes'  
shove yo' way 'long through.

Well, I is s'prized ter see you hyer. Malviny, how  
you do?

Why, Lor', how dat ar gal is grow'd—she might'ly  
like her Pa—

But den she got de likely looks in 'zemblance ter  
her Ma.

How's all? Is Uncle Samson up, an' Sary Ann  
got well?

Is little Job done 'covered frum dat cur'ous sickly  
spell?

Ef he don' git erlong an' mend, it cert'ny 'pears ter  
me,

Ef I wuz you, I'd gin dat chile er dose o' sass'fras tea.

You say dat Uncle Samson got de mis'ry in de  
face?

Why don' you git some Jimson-weed an' rub it on  
de place?

Den ef brown-kitis troubles him, I'd cure him, dat  
I 'ud;

I'd mek him smoke dry mullein leaves—dey's done  
me heap er good.

How long you been hyer? Is you seen de light-  
bread an' de cake?

Well, 'tain' no 'count—it 'pears like, now, folks don'  
know how ter bake.

De pies an' things is jes' as bad; de Fyar gits wuss  
an' wuss.

I thought Malviny's quilt de bes'. I say so frum de  
fus'.

Nor, I don' 'zibit nothin' 'tall—dey don' like color'd  
folks.

At ev'y thing dat I wan' sen' de white-folks laughs  
an' jokes.

I sen' some 'simmons fer ter show; dey eat up all  
de pile,

Den say dey don' show 'simmons hyer wid produce  
er de sile.



Jes' now I went ter see de race, but when I cross'  
de trac'

A p'leeceman cotch right hol' er me, and say, "Git  
back! Git back!"

I up an' tol' him ter his face ter quit dat bossin' me,  
Dat I done pay ter come in hyer, an' I wuz gwine  
ter see.

Jes' look er dyar—ain' dat er fight? Dat p'leeceman  
got him doh—

Git out de way! Dat's Washington! Don' hit him  
any mo'.

He ain' done nothin' 'cep' git drunk. Who pull out  
all his hyar?

He mos in gin'ral do git drunk when he come ter  
de Fyar.

You 'bleege' ter cyar him ter de cage fer 'sistin' de  
p'leece?

Dyar 'tis; he'll be de death er me—I never has no  
peace.

I s'posen, now, ter git him out, Ize got ter pay de  
cos'—

Good gracious! Whar is Little Joe! I know'd he  
gwine git los'!

DAT BOY

---

Good mornin', Sister, how you does? You wan' at  
chu'ch las' night?

Oh, things wuz 'citing' dyar, one time I thought  
folks gwine ter fight.

'Twas all erlong er dat dyar boy, Sis Mandy Jones's  
son.

I'd w'ar my chillun out if dey had done what he  
done done.

He walk in, all so solemn like, an' den what mus'  
he do,

But tek an' sot hisself right down jes' back o' Bro'  
Smith's pew.

I wuz dat s'prized I couldn't talk, but Jane say, "I  
declar!

What is de Jones boy doin' in de 'Amen Cornder'  
dyar?"

He sing straight long jes' like de res', an' come in  
wid de bass,

Till arfter 'while I kinder 'lowed he wan' no harden'  
case.

An' Jane, she say, "I b'lieves he's 'formed an' wan'  
ter do de right.

You heah me, Ma, he gwine be on de Mourner's  
Bench ternight."

Well, things wuz peaceful in de chu'ch, an' Jasper  
    'gin ter preach;  
He 'splain, an' 'spoun', an' talk right long, kase  
    souls is hard ter reach.  
'Twan' nothin' 'tall Bro' Smith wan' heah, doh it  
    wuz larn' an' deep;  
So Bro' Smith lean' er-ginst de pos', an' went right  
    fas' asleep.  
I heah er soun', same ez er breeze er-blowin' through  
    er tree,  
It 'peared ter come onreg'lar like—Cow-oo! Co-wo-o!  
    Co-we-e!

It 'trac' folks' notice, an' I tu'n an' say, "Hi, what  
    wuz dat?"  
But Jane tell me de fuss come frum de place Bro'  
    Smith wuz at.  
Bro' Jasper frown', an' look' right mad; I thought  
    he gwine ter say,  
"Jes' rouse dat deacon er de chu'ch, he mustn' sno'  
    dat way."  
But he kep' on, he didn' stop, de "Fourthly" wuz  
    de nex';  
He 'splain' dat studyin' 'stronomy helps 'lucidate de  
    tex'.

Den come er fuss—er lot er snorts like horgs wuz  
rootin' roun',  
An' 'fo' I knowed it I done 'sclame, "Dat's Bro'  
Smith, I be boun'!"  
An' Lindy Smith, she 'spec' so too, 'bout dat dey  
ain' no doubt;  
She wan' draw 'tention off her Pa, dat's why she  
'gin ter shout;  
But time she start, Jane up an' say: "Dyar he, I  
seed him sho'!  
Jes' soon ez Mister Smith wuz 'sleep dat boy com-  
mence ter sno'!

He set back dyar, an' when Bro' Smith done let his  
haid fall down,  
Dat good-fer-nothin'-low-life boy prepyar ter mek  
er soun'."  
Den Bro' Smith riz, an' grab dat boy, he cotch him  
by de hyar,  
He didn' wait till chu'ch buss up, he frail him down  
right dyar.  
Dat rascal 'rassle all his might, he kick Bro' Smith's  
shin bone;  
He holler, "Quit dat hittin' me!" an' "Whyn't you  
lemme 'lone!"

He paw, an' bite, an' carry on rampageous ez er colt,  
But 'twa' no use o' doin' dat, Bro. Smith jes' hilt  
his holt;

An' Bro'er Smith he tell dat boy he gwine ter have  
him know

He ain' ter put dat mouf o' hisn in folks affyars no  
mo';

An' ef he is afeard ter die, an' wan' ter keep his helf,  
He'll let de sleepers in de chu'ch do snorin' fer dey-  
self.

THE MARCH OF THE LODGES.

---

Dey's comin', holdin' up dey haid, er-lookin' sorter  
proud;

Dey's comin', wid de horn an' fife er-blowin'  
mighty loud;

Dey's steppin' kinder solemn like an' marchin' ter  
de chune—

Oh! dis hyer is de funerul uv er ve'y 'portant coon.

De music whar dey's steppin' ter is got de mourn-  
ful wail

Whar makes er sickly nigger turn er I'sh-potato  
pale.

"Flee like er bird ter de mountain" 's what dey  
play,

But huc-come I know dis yer bird is flyin' dat er  
way?

De "Swarthy Hos' er Israel" is 'vancin' mighty  
gran',

But natchally dey's doin' dat, dey's jes' behin' de  
ban';

An' dem whar totes de little books is "Scribes er  
Galilee,"

Dey allus 'scorts de banner-man, de "Famous  
Pharisee."

My gracious! Ain' he puff' up heap wid 'portance  
er hisself,

He better slacken up de belt befo' he hurt his helf.

I ain' no sayin' he ain' strong, aldo' he sho' is  
fat—

Man, Suh! dat is a portly place de flag-staff's  
res'in' at.

But dat ar' gem'man so het up, er-totin' er de mace,  
Whar got de sperspiration streams er-runnin' down  
his face,

He is de bigges' boss er all—his name is Mr. Sam—  
His titlement is "Fountain Head er Risin' Sons  
er Ham."

Yas, dat is Sister Lindy Smith er-ridin' in de hack.  
I see de collar er de lodge is wrop er-roun' her na'k.

She washes fur "de Quality," an' ev'y whar she  
goes

She loosens up de starch fur 'em by w'arin' er dey  
clos'.

But look er dyar at little Lige!—Jes' watch him  
cotch de step—

Ef he's er-gwine all de way I lay he got ter hep.

Dem pants er his is heap too big, dey's roun' his  
shoes, dey is;

Ef I was him I'd res' er spell, an' h'ist my galluses.

Nor Suh! I ain't erfeared ter die—Ize done prepyar  
ter go,  
I got er lot er 'ligion now an' gwin'ter git some mo';  
And when de S'ieties Ize j'ined turn out ter bury  
me,  
Dey won' leave cooks enough at wuk ter git de  
white-folks' tea.



SPEECH OF DE REV. GABRIEL GIZZARD-  
FORT ON DE CELEBRATION OF DE  
FOURTEENTH COMMANDMENT.

---

My Bretheren an' Sisteren, now wharfo' is we come  
Er-gatherin' tergether at de beatin' er de drum,

Korvortin' roun' de city streets, an' marchin' ter  
de squar;

I tek, an' ax you once ergain, what is we doin'  
dyar?

We's had er mighty big parade, an' gwines to an'  
fro,

We's hollered fittin' fer ter buss de walls er Jericho;

An' now, while we's er-settin' down, an' ladies,  
in de hacks,

Is fotchin' bags an' baskets out an' fixin' up de  
snacks,

Befo' partakin' er de pies, er eatin' er de aigs,

Er succulation on de souse, er chewin' chicken laigs,

Befo' de liquordation er de kaigs er lemonade

I ax you, p'intedly, *wharfo'* is dis hyer gran' parade?

It ain' no use ter answer me. Dat question's on'y  
me'nt

Ter set er-gwine dis hyer speech, an' p'int de argy-  
ment.

De preacher is de on'y one ter 'rassle wid de fac's,  
An' 'splore, an' 'splain, an' spatify de questions  
whar he ax.

Perceedin' therefo', Bretheren, I 'nounces ter yo'  
face

De titlement er dis hyer speech is "Progress er  
de Race."

An' in consideration er de takin' er de tex'  
De 'terpertation er de same is natchally de nex'.

What signicates de 'scription er de 'spression you  
is heard?

"De Progress er de Race" is sho' er mighty p'inted  
word.

It 'zibits dat we's movin' on—mozeing ev'ywhar—  
Er-stoppin' jes' ter res' er spell, an' den perceedin'  
dyar;

It misticates de 'nouncement er how high we  
gwin'ter rise,

But hyer we is, pas' Jordan's stream, wid  
Canaan 'fo' our eyes.

We's heah'd de trump er freedom blow, an' follierin'  
de soun'

We seen er mighty rootin' up, an' heap er drappin'  
down.

De wicked, like de green bay tree, is troubled  
wid er crash;

De proud er heart done fly befo' great flingin' up  
er trash.

De prodigal whar tended horgs an' tuk an' eat de  
hus'

Is fyarly travellin' down de road, an' kickin' up de  
dus'.

He smell de cookin' far erway, 'an 'cep' he break  
er shaf',

He gwine git home 'fo' supper time, an' eat de  
golden calf.

Yas, tek de mule, hitch up yo' team, grab hol' de  
drivin' line;

Don' be erfeared er spillin' out, jes' go 'long whar  
you gwine.

Rejoice I say, my Bretheren—my Sisteren rejoice—

Go git yo' harps like David done, an' mek er  
joyful noise.

Behol' an' lo, de bottom rail is whar de folks kin  
see;

De yaller dorg is nosein' roun' whar p'inters used  
ter be.

De coons ain' scared er nothin' 'tall, an' sho'ly ez  
you born,

De coal black crows is cawin' loud an' pickin' up  
de corn.

Yea verily, we's frisky now, we kinder feels our  
oats,

An' ev'ywhar dyar's heap er folks what want ter  
buy our votes.

Up in New York an' Boston, too, dey's sellin'  
mighty nice,

But roun' 'bout Philadelphia we gits de bigges'  
price.  
So what de use er stayin' hyer whar 'tain' no chance  
ter trade;  
I allus leaves at 'lection time, an' gits my 'spenses  
paid  
At all de polls in dat dyar place, de town er  
Brother's Love,  
I changes coats, I gits er name, an' gives a vote  
er shove.

ASTRONOMICAL OBSERVATIONS.

---

You see dem niggers walkin' dyar, dey's all jes'  
    gwine one way,  
Dey 'spec' ter heah Ole Jasper preach erbout de  
    Sun ter-day.

What! you ain' larn de sun do move, and Jasper  
    'splain all dat?

Well, you sho' ain' no Richmond man! Whar-  
    bouts *is* you live at?

When ole man Jasper 'nounce de tex'—he allus does  
    dat fus'—

He looks so full er argyment you 'spec' his haid  
    gwine bus';

But when he 'rassle wid larn' folks he jes' on-  
    loose his tongue,

An' show he got de underholt, an' dem folks  
    gwine git flung.

My gal, Malindy's one dem kind; she's done been  
    ter de school,

An' claim she's studied 'stronomy, an' Jasper is er  
    fool.

She 'lows dat she's too good ter wuk—dat shows  
    what larnin's worf—

She calls de risin' er de sun "rosation er de yearth."

I gin her what John Jasper say, its truth, Suh, I  
be boun'

Dat ev'ything gwine spill right out ef dis hyer yearth  
tu'n roun'.

She kinder laugh an' den she 'nounce dat's some'n  
she kin 'spoun';

It's grabbity, grabs hol' er things when we's tu'n  
upside down.

I stop her dyar, I 'sputes dat p'int, kase huc-come  
dat gwine be?

In all de time dat I done 'zis', it ain' grab holt er me.

She love ter projec' wid dem things folks looks  
through at de stars,

An' dyar wuz one out on de street she claim' wuz  
p'int at Mars.

I ax de man how much he charge', he say, "Fi' cent  
fer one."

An' den I look straight up de thing same ez I shoot  
er gun.

I tuk so long he wan' ter know ef I wan' seein'  
sights,

But I 'spon' back, dat all I see wuz poles an'  
'lec'ric lights.

He tell me, "Ef you'd shet dat eye you'd see er  
small red ball."

I shet my eyes, an' time I did, I ain' see nothin'  
'tall.

I don' trus' dem dyar enstruments an' men de like  
er dat

Whar claims dey 'lustrates stars an' things, an'  
cyar'n p'int whar dey's at.

I heah dey measures ter de sun, an' say it's b'ilin'  
hot;

I let 'em know I wan' ter see de tape-line whar  
dey's got;

An' ef it re'ches ter de sun, I jes' wan' ax 'em den,  
Ain' dat hot sun gwine scotch de man whar climb  
dyar wid de en'?

Ize cert'ny glad dat Jasper's hyer ter 'splain all  
'bout de skies,

Kase ef he wan' er heap er folks would 'cep' dem  
mons'us lies.

Ize done convert dat gal er mine; I done it dis er  
way,

I gin her all de rope she wan', I let her say her  
say,

But t'other mornin' Lindy's ma wuz grumblin' mighty  
heap,

An' say ter me, "Does you know, Si, dat gal is still  
ersleep?"

I holler, "Why'nt you git up gal, an' go 'long  
feed de cow?"

An' I keep thinkin' ter myself, "My patience  
'zausted now."

She answer, sorter sleepy like, "It's strange dat you  
cyar'n see

Dat folks is 'bleege ter sleep right late when study'n'  
'stronomy."

I tuk an' fotch er hic'ry switch, an' den, I lay, I  
prove

Dat when de sun's er-movin' up dat nigger's  
gwine ter move.

John Jasper, a negro preacher, famous in Virginia for  
his sermon, "The Sun Do Move."



---

DAT 'LEC'RIC CYAR.

---

It ain' no use er-takin' time ter projec' wid er mule,  
De man whar does dat in dese days ain' better'n  
er fool;

Fer things done change, I know dey is, ain' I  
done see it, Suh?

An' ploughs an' cyarts gwine run erlong jes' like  
de 'lec'ric cyar.

Don' nothin' pull er shev' dem cyars, an' still dey  
fyarly fly;

De driver don' say, "Come up, mule!" an' "Gee!"  
an' "Wah!" an' "Hi!"

I git on one de other day—dat 'speyunce gwine  
ter las'—

Dey don' suit me, aldo' dey mout dem whar wan'  
go 'long fas'.

De man whar stan' up in de front he tu'n er kinder  
thing

Dat look jes' like er grind-stone crank—de bell go  
ting-er-ling;

Den 'twuz I feel er mons'us juck—it fling me  
down right flat—

It come so quick I holler out, "My Marster!  
What wuz dat?"

I up, an' grab er little rope ter keep frum fallin'  
down,

But ev'y time I pull de rope de bell would mek er  
soun'.

De en' wuz tie' onter er clock whar didn' run er  
tick,

But den de han' on dat ar clock would kinder  
jump down quick.

Er man say, "Leggo dat ar rope, an' lemme have  
yo' fyar."

He talk so peart I say ter him, "I ain' done nothin',  
Suh!"

"You is—you's gone an' rung fi' fyars." Dat's  
what he had ter say.

Two ten cent an' er fi' cent piece I good ez fling  
erway.

I 'uz pestered kase I pull' dat rope, an' I 'uz skeered  
too,

Fer some'n underneath de flo' wuz gwine zoo-woo-  
woo,

I done heah tell dat b'ilers bus', an' ingines runs  
erway,

An' cyars' chock full er folks an' things, git smash'  
up ev'y day;

An' dem what don' git kill' right den gits bline an'  
deef an' dumb—

An' standin' dyar I mighty 'feared dis nigger's time  
done come.

I tuk an' light out fer de doh, an' on de flatfom  
dyar,

De man wan' stop me, but I say, "Tu'n loose an'  
gimme a'r!"  
I tuk an' jump, but some'n 'peared ter tu'n me roun'  
an' roun',  
An' 'fo' I know it I done made de 'quaintance er  
de groun'.  
I 'uz sorter daze', an' look ter see whar 'bouts my  
hat done went,  
But I wan' hit 'cep' in de haid, an' dat jes' git er  
dent.  
De man whar made dem 'lec'ric cyars, you heah me,  
wuz "Ole Scratch"—  
De fire come poppin' out de wheels same ez you  
light er match.  
An' so it is, jes' like I say, tain' pull' by nothin'  
'tall;  
Dey's tuk, an' shev', right out de way, de nigger,  
mule, an all.  
An' you's done heah dat prophecy, dat now sho' is  
come true,  
"When white-folks 'spenses wid de mule, de nigger  
gwine go too."

SEEING THE CIRCUS.

---

Boom! Boom! Boom! Hi! Don' you heah de  
drum?

Boom! Boom! Boom! Run hyer! Yarn' dey  
come!

Tek an' clim' up in de tree. Don' you git no fall,  
Kotch er holt like possums does, den you'll see  
it all.

Boom! Boom! Boom! Dey'll be nigh ter us  
soon.

Boom! Boom! Boom! Why don' dey play er  
chune?

Watch dat lady comin' now, man suh! dat's er  
sight;

All her clos' is made er gol'! Ain' she shinin'  
bright?

Dat ar gem'man by her side, you heah me, he's de boss.  
I knows it kase he 'pears so proud er-settin' on de  
horse.

Hyer come de ban'! I 'spec' 'twill play, I wants  
ter heah de crash.

Oh! dat big man whar beats de drum gwine mek  
dem cimlins clash.

*Ta-ra! Ta-ra! Ta-ra! Ta-ra! Dyar 'tis, Oh, dat's de  
soun'!*

*Ta-ra! Ta-ra! Ta-ra! Ta-ra! Dey's talkin', I be  
boun'!*

'Tain' none de ban's in dis hyer town kin kick up  
dat ar fuss.

Dem Dutchmans blowin' er de horns is blowin' fit  
ter bus'.

Ain' dat er chune dey's playin' doh, dey's got it  
down right fine.

Ef I could play dem enstruments I lay I'd jine  
de line.

I wish dat nigger walkin' dyar would tek an' drap  
de drum,

I'd go an' ax de Cap'n-man ter lemme tote it some.  
I'd git in dat ar nigger's coat, I'd look like some'n  
gran',

I'd cotch de step, an' mark de time same ez er  
little man.

You heah dem lions in de cage? Dey'd kill folks,  
dat dey mout,

I hope de doh is lock' up tight, so day ain' gwine  
git out.

Dey's got de bigges', sharpes' teef dat I is ever see;  
I let you know Ize sorter glad Ize settin' up er  
tree.

Ole elephant gwine flop his ears—he travelin'  
mons'us slow,

I 'spec' he's got so fat an' big, dat's fas' as he kin  
go.

Dyar he, right dyar! You mus' be blin'! What  
is you talkin' 'bout?

Ain' none de critters got two tails; de fus' tail is  
de snout.

What dat de lady on de cage got wrop' all roun'  
her naik?

Hyer, drive 'long dyar! Tek dat thing 'way! Good  
gracious what er snake!

Don' stop right under dis hyer tree! Oh me, de  
lim' done break!

My Marster! Ef I hits de cage *please* lemme 'scape  
dat snake!

## A FIRE INSURANCE POLICY.

---

I ain' gwi' fight de devil wid fire;  
I don' wan' git no nigher  
Den er thousan' mile  
Ter de burnin' pile  
Er tar an' pitch an' kerosene ile.  
I don' wan' face de congregation  
Er all damnation  
In conf'igation—  
I'd burn ez hot  
Ez a light-wood knot.  
Er same ez a match  
Rubbed 'ginst "Ole Scratch."  
Nor Suh, my son,  
I teks an' run  
Jes' time tem'tation starts de fun.  
I ain' de kin'  
Ter allus fin'  
I kin lick Satan wid strength er min'.

One time "Ole Sin"  
Come trompin' in  
Wid a glass er gin,  
An' he say ter me—  
Say he—

"It's time ter begin.  
You knows de tas'e an' you knows de smell,  
An' you knows mighty well  
You's boun' fer Hell;  
So drink yo' dram,  
An' don' give a dam'.  
I cotches yo' eye—Here's ter you, Sam!"  
He look at me an' I look at him,  
An' I knowed fer sartin my chance wuz slim;  
An' den he say—"Oh, don' be 'feared,  
'Tain' nothin' 'tall ter mek you skeered.  
I wish you wealth, an' I wish you joy—  
Come, drink ter de health er 'Mister Ole Boy':  
Kotch hol' de glass an' heave-er-hoy."

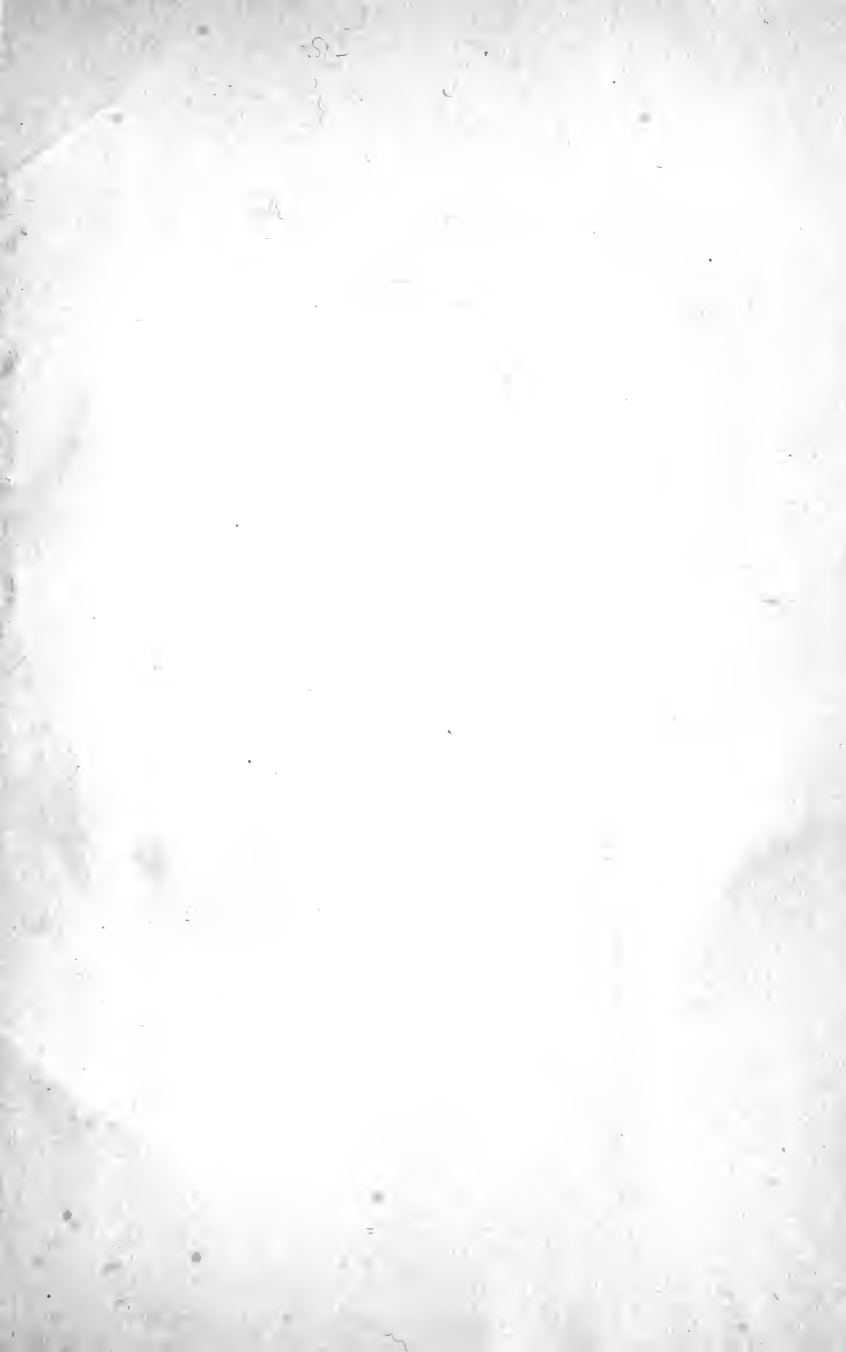
Den some'n nother said ter me—  
"Ef you wan' ter be free  
You better mosee.  
It ain' no use  
Ter mek excuse;  
You jes' vamoose,  
Kase hyer come Want an' hyer come Doubt  
Projec'in' 'bout;  
You better light out."  
Den, sho's you born,  
Dis nigger wuz gone.  
He run down de trac'  
Wid er clickerty-clac',  
He did fer a fac',



He never look back.  
An' down ter dis day  
When de devil's ter pay  
He gits out de way,  
An' dat's why he's hyer er sayin' his say.

Thar'fo', good people one an' all,  
Harken, an' heah, an' heed de call;  
Ac' like er man,  
Tek yo' foot in yo' han',  
An' run, an' run, an' run, an' run,  
An' ef you run  
Like I done done  
You'll soon fin' out de fight is won.  
Er ef you'll run jes' half ez good  
Satan won' have no kin'lin' wood,  
But back ter Hell he'll have ter turn,  
An' say—" 'Tain' nothin' lef' ter burn;  
We'll have ter cook wid what dyar is."  
An' den, I lay, it ain' no doubt  
All perdition's gwine ter shout—  
Oh, go 'long 'way! What dat you say?  
We's nigh 'bout friz—  
Hell fire's tuk an' gone right out."







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